

## Usability of language tools, a practical approach

There are about 7000 languages in the world. It has been estimated that in the next 100 years maybe 50-90% of those languages will die. It is important to document those languages and try to revitalize them via language development.

It is no small task to document or develop one language, not to speak of thousands of languages. A traditional approach is that the task has been carried out by outsiders, who have university degrees, are proficient with computers and know English or some other major language. If we think about the urgency of the task, we need to involve the local people, in order to get the job done.

In order to enable the local people to document and develop their mother tongues, they will need to have language related computer tools that are designed for them. That entails that the user interface is simple and that it is localized into a language that they understand.

In my presentation I will discuss usability from the point of view of such computer novices. Such users are defined as literate people who have at least six years of education and who know at least two languages: their mother tongue and a language of wider communication.

This presentation is based on existing technologies only, no visionary bleeding edge technology is considered.

In my presentation I will talk about Human Computer Interaction from the practical perspective with examples. I will talk about methodologies and processes for designing interfaces and about techniques for evaluating and comparing them.

Some of the topics covered are: a) the notion of a mental model. b) the notion of trust (which includes: protection of data, ease of use and consistency). c) focus on users and tasks. d) user testing. e) standard, open, text based file formats.